

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the instant application is respectfully requested. The present amendment is responsive to the Office Action of March 23, 2005, in which claims 1-26 are presently pending. Of those, claims 1, 2, 6, 7, 11, 13, 17, 18, 22 and 23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,517,120 to Mistic, et al. In addition, claims 3, 8, 12, 14, 19 and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Mistic, in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0169374 by Jevtic. Claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 15, 16, 20, 21, 25 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Mistic, in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0125888 by Visser, et al.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 11-13, 15-18, 20-23, 25 and 26 are additionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication 2004/0070394 by Gonzalez Ballester, et al., in view of Visser, et al. Claims 6, 7, 9 and 10 are additionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Gonzalez Ballester, et al., in view of Visser, et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,577,888 to Chan, et al. Claims 3, 14, 19 and 24 are additionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Gonzalez Ballester, et al., in view of Visser, et al., and further in view of Jevtic. Finally, claim 8 is additionally rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Gonzalez Ballester, et al., in view of Visser, et al., in further view of Chan, et al., and further in view of Jevtic. For the following reasons, however, it is respectfully submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance.

As an initial matter, a replacement set of drawings is submitted herewith in order to address the Examiner's objection to the lack of clarity in Figures 5-8.

With regard to the §102 and §103 rejections over the art of record, independent claims 1, 6, 11, 17 and 22 have been amended as set forth above to more particularly point out that: (1) each of the individual coil elements in the head and chest portions are

associated with separate channels; and (2) with regard to the cylindrically tapered head portion 102, the cylindrical tapering is such that the superior end of the head portion has a smaller diameter than the inferior end. Support for this amendment is found at least in paragraphs [0030] and [0031] of the specification, as well as in Figures 2 and 3 of the drawings. Moreover, paragraph [0031] of the specification is amended to add further description regarding the cylindrically tapered head portion 102. However, no new matter is added as this feature is clearly indicated in originally filed Figures 2 and 3.

The present amendment overcomes the §102 and §103 rejections, as applied to both the Misic based rejections and the Gonzalez Ballester/Visser based rejections. First, a review of the Misic reference reveals that the coils disclosed therein are not in fact associated with separate channels as presently claimed, but are instead configured as a quadrature coil (abstract, column 3, lines 52-54). As will be recognized by one skilled in the art, a quadrature coil is characterized by a single receiver channel. Moreover, the specific configuration of the head portion as now more particularly recited in the claims is not taught or suggested in any of the cited references. In particular, the cited portions of the description and Figures of Visser do not teach the superior end of the head portion having a smaller diameter than the inferior end.

Claims 3, 8, 14, 19 and 24 have also been amended to further specify that the isolation of the nearest neighbor coil elements by transformer decoupling is implemented without a capacitive network (see, for example, Figs. 4-5 of the drawings). In contrast, Jevtic's nearest neighbor decoupling is carried out through a capacitor decoupling network (abstract, paragraphs [0073], [0076], Figs. 1-3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11). Accordingly, the rejections of claims 3, 8, 14, 19 and 24 are also overcome on this additional basis.

Finally, the Applicants address the Examiner's claim objections in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Office Action as follows. With regard to claim 26, the present amendment adds the number "26" which was inadvertently omitted in the electronic version of the specification. However, with regard to claim 21, the Applicants respectfully traverse this

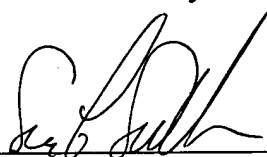
objection for the reason that paragraph [0031] and Figures 2 and 3 of the disclosure describe four individual coils in both the anterior and posterior sections of the chest portion of the coil. As such, it is respectfully requested that the claim objections have been overcome.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. No new matter has been entered and no additional fees are believed to be required. However, if any fees are due with respect to this Amendment, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 07-0845 maintained by Applicants' attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,
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